

SN. 10/822,215

ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. NAGA:008

REMARKS

Claims 2-6 and 8-13 are now pending in this application for which applicants seek reconsideration.

Amendment

Claims 1 and 7 have been canceled, and claims 2-5, 8-11, and 13 have been amended. Allowable claims 2, 3, 5, 8, 10, and 11 have been placed in independent form. These claims also have been amended to improve their form and remove the informalities identified by the examiner. Note that the claims no longer use the phrase "the extended portion" to overcome the § 112 rejection. Claims 4 and 9 have been amended to depend from allowable claims 3 and 8, respectively.

Allowable Claims

Claims 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, and 10-13 were indicated to be allowable if they are placed in independent form. As claims 2, 3, 5, 8, 10, and 11 have been placed in independent form, claims 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, and 10-13 are now in condition for allowance. Also, since claims 1 and 7 have been canceled, only the allowable claims remain pending in this application.

Art Rejection

Claims 1, 7, and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Sakamoto (USP 6,179,372). Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Sakamoto. By canceling claims 1 and 7, and depending claims 4 and 9 from the allowable claims, these rejections have been rendered moot.

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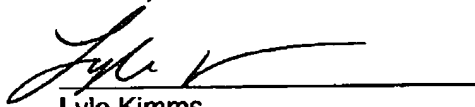
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Conclusion

Applicants submit that claims 2-6 and 8-13 are in condition for allowance. Should the examiner have any issues concerning this reply or any other outstanding issues remaining in this application, applicants urge the examiner to contact the undersigned to expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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Reg. No. 34,079 (Rule 34)

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Date

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